

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ACDA-12 TRSE-00 OMB-01 AID-05 HA-05 NSCE-00
SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 EB-08 /105 W
-----078604 151739Z /45

O R 151605Z JUN 78 ZFF-4
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8966
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LAGOS 7433

LONDON FOR ASST. SEC. MOOSE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAID, EFIN, PINS, MOPS, XA, OAU, NI, CG
SUBJECT: CONSULTATIONS ON ZAIRE SITUATION

REF: STATE 150348

1. SUMMARY. EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMISSIONER GARBA TOLD
CHARGE JUNE 15 THAT THE NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT IS VERY
CONCERNED BY THE INTRODUCTION OF EUROPEAN AND THEN
INTER-AFRICAN DEFENSE FORCES IN SHABA PROVINCE AND
THAT AFRICAN COUNTRIES WILL DISCUSS THIS PROBLEM AT
LENGTH DURING THE KHARTOUM SUMMIT. GARBA WAS NOT
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OPTIMISTIC, HOWEVER, THAT THE OAU COULD SET UP A
PEACEKEEPING FORCE TO OPERATE IN THIS AREA. HE AGREED
THAT A GENUINE RECONCILIATION BETWEEN ANGOLA AND ZAIRE
IS ESSENTIAL FOR FUTURE STABILIZATION OF THE AREA
AND HE SAID THAT NIGERIA WOULD TRY TO FIND OUT WHETHER
IT COULD CONTRIBUTE TO SUCH A RECONCILIATION. GARBA
URGED THE USG AND OTHER WESTERN GOVERNMENTS TO EXERT

STRONG PRESSURE ON MOBUTU TO ABANDON HIS BRUTAL METHODS
AND FOSTER RECONCILIATION WITH THE KATANGANS. END
SUMMARY.

2. ON JUNE 15 CHARGE DISCUSSED USG VIEWS ON THE ZAIRE
SITUATION WITH EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMISSIONER GARBA.
CHARGE DREW UPON THE TALKING POINTS IN PARA 3
OF REFTEL AND SAID THAT LT. GEN. OBASANJO
WILL SOON BE RECEIVING A REPLY TO HIS LETTER TO THE
PRESIDENT OF JUNE 1.

3. GARBA RESPONDED THAT THE FMG'S VIEWS WITH REGARD
TO THE AMERICAN AIRLIFT OPERATIONS INTO ZAIRE HAD BEEN
SET FORTH VERY CLEARLY IN OBASANJO'S LETTER. THE FMG
HAD BEEN DEEPLY DISTURBED BY THESE INTERVENTIONS.
THE WEST HAD LONG BEEN COMPLAINING ABOUT THE ACTIVITIES
OF THE RUSSIANS AND CUBANS IN AFRICA BUT NOW THE WESTERN
POWERS HAD GONE AHEAD AND INTERVENED IN ZAIRE IN A
FASHION WHICH WAS NOT WELCOME. MANY AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS
FELT THEY WERE BEING TREATED AS PAWNS IN THIS SITUATION.
THEY HAVE NOT YET DECIDED WHAT CAN BEST BE DONE TO
IMPROVE THE SITUATION BUT THERE WILL CERTAINLY BE
MUCH DISCUSSION OF IT AT THE KHARTOUM SUMMIT.

4. GARBA SAID THAT THE FMG SHARES WITH THE USG A
DESIRE TO ESTABLISH A STABLE SITUATION IN ZAIRE. IT
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RECOGNIZES THAT MOBUTU MADE AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION
TO THE STABILITY OF ZAIRE WHEN HE CAME TO POWER THERE.
HOWEVER THAT SITUATION CHANGED LONG AGO. GARBA
EMPHASIZED THAT MOBUTU MUST NOW CHANGE HIS METHODS
OF OPERATION IF THERE IS TO BE ANY IMPROVEMENT IN
THE PROSPECTS FOR ZAIRE. HE REFERRED IN THIS CON-
NECTION TO THE VERY CRITICAL COMMENTS WHICH THE
NIGERIAN PRESS HAS RECENTLY BEEN MAKING ABOUT THE
BRUTALITY, CORRUPTION AND INEFFICIENCY OF MOBUTU'S
GOVERNMENT. GARBA SAID THAT MOBUTU'S TREATMENT OF
HIS FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER, NGUZA KARL-I-BOND,
HAD BEEN APPALLING BUT TYPICAL. THAT
INDIVIDUAL, TO WHOM GARBA REFERRED AS "A GOOD

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 LAGOS 7433

LONDON FOR ASST. SEC. MOOSE

FRIEND," COULD HAVE DONE MUCH TO ASSIST IN A
RECONCILIATION BETWEEN MOBUTU AND THE INHABITANTS OF
SHABA PROVINCE. INSTEAD HE HAD BEEN IMPRISONED ABOUT
A YEAR AGO APPARENTLY ON THE FLIMSIEST EVIDENCE, AND THE
NIGERIANS HAVE HAD TO INTERVENE STRENUOUSLY TO
PLEAD THAT HE NOT BE KILLED.

5. GARBA ALSO COMMENTED THAT MOBUTU SEEMS ONLY
INTERESTED IN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF HIS
CAPTIAL, AT THE EXPENSE OF HIS COUNTRY. IN GARBA'S
OPINION MOBUTU MUST WORK HARD TO WIN THE TRUST OF
THE KATANGANS IF HE IS SINCERELY INTERESTED IN THE
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FUTURE STABILITY OF HIS COUNTRY. OBASANJO HAD SPEND
TWO DAYS IN KINSHASA DURING HIS TRIP TO EAST AND
CENTRAL AFRICA LAST FALL SO AS TO DISCUSS WITH MOBUTU
AT CONSIDERABLE LENGTH THE NEED TO INSTITUTE
GOVERNMENTAL REFORMS. THE ADVICE HAD NOT BEEN HEEDED.
GARBA RECOMMENDED THAT THE WESTERN COUNTRIES
MAKE VERY CLEAR TO MOBUTU THAT THEY WILL NOT CONTINUE
TO HELP HIM UNLESS HE INSTITUTES REFORMS. UNFORTUNATELY,

HE SAID, MOBUTU HAS SURROUNDED HIMSELF WITH SYCOPHANTS.

6. GARBA AGREED WITH THE USG THAT THE PROBLEM OF SHABA WILL NOT BE RESOLVED IN THE LONG RUN UNLESS THERE IS A GENUINE RECONCILIATION BETWEEN ZAIRE AND ANGOLA WHICH INVOLVES MUTUAL RESPECT FOR THE COMMON BORDER AND MUTUAL ABSTENTION FROM MISCHIEF-MAKING IN EACH OTHER'S TERRITORY. HE SAID THAT NIGERIA INTENDS TO SEE WHETHER IT CAN CONTRIBUTE TO SUCH A RECONCILIATION. THE FMG HAD INTENDED TO TAKE THIS UP WITH MOBUTU WHEN HE VISITED LAGOS TODAY. THAT TRIP HAD BEEN CANCELLED BY MOBUTU BUT NIGERIA WOULD STILL TRY TO FIND OUT WHETHER IT CAN PLAY A USEFUL ROLE. GARBA ADDED THAT NIGERIA WOULD BE DOING THIS ON ITS OWN BUT THAT THE OAU MIGHT ALSO AT ITS SUMMIT MEETING REQUEST SOME MEMBER STATES TO UNDERTAKE MEDIATION.

7. AS FOR THE POSSIBILITY OF CREATING AN INTER-AFRICAN FORCE UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE OAU FOR THE DEFENSE OF SHABA PROVINCE, GARBA THOUGHT THIS WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO ACCOMPLISH. HE MENTIONED IN THIS REGARD THE GREAT DIFFICULTIES WHICH HAD BEEN ENCOUNTERED WHEN THE ATTEMPT WAS MADE TO SET UP AN AFRICAN HIGH COMMAND.

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8. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH GARBA MADE CLEAR THAT THE FMG IS UNHAPPY WITH THE INTER-AFRICAN PEACEKEEPING FORCE NOW IN ZAIRE, AND THE US ROLE IN PUTTING IT THERE, NO BITTERNESS OR ANGER SHOWED THROUGH HIS REMARKS ON THIS SUBJECT. ONE REASON FOR THIS RESTRAINT MAY HAVE BEEN THAT THE FMG IS STILL QUITE PUZZLED, APPARENTLY, AS TO THE BEST WAY TO APPROACH THE SHABA PROBLEM. IT SEEMED CLEAR FROM GARBA'S ATTITUDE THAT NIGERIA WOULD LIKE TO PLAY A MEDIATION ROLE BETWEEN ANGOLA AND ZAIRE, BUT THAT HE IS BY NO MEANS CONFIDENT THAT THE FMG COULD HAVE ANY SUCCESS. THE MOST FORCEFUL PART OF GARBA'S REMARKS WAS HIS EMPHASIS ON THE NEED FOR MOBUTU TO REFORM HIS WAYS AND FOR THE WESTERN POWERS TO EXERT ENOUGH PRESSURE UPON MOBUTU TO INSURE THAT HE DOES SO. WYMAN

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